

REMARKS

Prior to entry of the present amendment, claims 1-45 are pending. Claims 1-3, 12-16, 32-34 have been canceled. Claim 46 has been added. Claims 4-9, 11, 17-23, 26-29, 35-41 and 43. Claim 46 has been added. Claim 4 is the sole independent claim.

In the Office action dated June 21, 2005, the Examiner placed a formal election requirement as follows:

Species I: Claims 4-11, directed to a method of forming self-aligned buried contact pair with the formation of only one inter-dielectric layer (ILD);

Species II: Claims 17-31, directed to a method of forming self-aligned buried contact pair with a step of forming a third inter-dielectric layer and a step of forming direct contact pads; and

Species III: Claims 35-45, directed to a method of forming self-aligned buried contact pair with a step of forming a third inter-dielectric layer without the step of forming direct contact pads.

Applicants hereby elect Species II, directed to claims 17-31. It is further submitted that claims 4-11 are generic to Species I, II and III, and 35-45 are generic to Species II and III.

In view of the instant amendment, examination of claims 4-11, 17-31 and 35-45 is respectfully requested. Receipt of the initial Office action on the merits is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.